

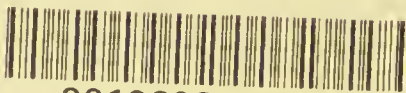
Figure Piping

R. Russell

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FIGURE PIPING.

FIGURE PIPING:

ITS METHODS AND ITS USES.

BY

F. RUSSELL,^x M.C.A.

London:

BAKER AND CONFECTIONER, LIMITED,
61 & 62, CHANCERY LANE, W.C.

1903.

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PREFACE.

A VERY few words of introduction will suffice for this little book. Its author, Mr. F.

Russell, has been known for some time past as one of our most skilful and artistic pipers, and the specimens of his work, which have been shown principally at the Food and Cookery Exhibition, have excited the admiration of the casual spectator, and have received the more solid applause of the judges of the art. The reproductions we give here, though some of them have lost a good deal in losing colour, are certain to please all and will probably excite many to emulate. And these last will find that Mr. Russell is as clear in his instructions as he is artistic in his work. This book ought to do something to extend among the trade the practice of the most fascinating branch of ornamental art—Figure Piping—and it is with that view that it has been produced.

EDITOR,

“BAKER AND CONFECTIONER.”

FIGURE PIPING.

Chapter I.

INTRODUCTION.

“WHAT, AGAIN?” I fancy I can hear someone exclaim, who has read some former efforts of mine in this direction and on this subject; and with all due respect I venture to echo the word, “Again!” And I will take the reader into my confidence, and give some reasons why I renew this subject after a lapse of a few years, during which time, to my certain knowledge, the art of figure piping has sprung up from nooks and crannies where it was previously non-existent, and, in one or two instances, where least expected.

My reasons, then, for again bringing this most varied and interesting art to the front is, firstly, because I have been requested to do so by several piping artists, who want to vary their subjects; and, secondly, because within the last two years we have had most convincing proof that figure piping holds its own as an art with any other form of decorative sugar work—it has had a fair honest trial for two seasons, and under the disinterested and impartial judgment of different experts it has scored, finishing up with a win against any variety. I would respectfully beg of the reader to accept this statement without the slightest taint of egotism on my part, which is not intended in the slightest degree; but I make the

statement to prove beyond a doubt that the subject we have in hand *is* worthy of consideration and encouragement to all pipers who are of an artistic turn of mind. Moreover, there are doubtless scores of young pipers to whom these articles will appeal for the first time, and, in regard to the scope for learning, I can assure the reader that I have learnt a very great deal since I first entered in the competitions, and even now never take my paper cornet in hand but the mind is made up to learn something more. So varied and so spontaneous may the subjects in this branch of the art become that we may look upon the fund of designs as practically inexhaustible. Surely this should act as an incentive to the young piper; and when you come to consider that you can make a veritable sugar picture to frame and glaze and hang in your private sitting room, or pipe a Christmas card, menu, or birthday card, you will readily see that figure piping with a meaning will be far more interesting as an object to look at than the most elaborate bit of scrolling or string work that was ever squeezed through a tube. Brilliant and commercial as it may look on a bride cake, it is doomed to be destroyed. The bride, who is supposed to make the first attack as the "Destroying Angel," stands nervously with the knife, and, her mind being pre-occupied, can no more see the artistic merit of that cake than Hodge from the plough can see the literary worth of the soliloquy in Hamlet. The destruction of that cake soon becomes complete. The elaborate festoons, scrolls, and monograms—all of which were a credit to the piping artist—are mangled beyond recognition, and the head of the dove, or the foot of a possible cupid may be just recognised as the sections are packed away in those wedge-shaped cardboard boxes, with which we are all so familiar.

Now, although "artistic piping" may cover all the branches which jut from the parent stem, we may with safety come to the conclusion our branch has dis-

tinctive features, which are very marked, for while the "scroller" aims at geometrical accuracy and detail, the flower piper aims at thinness of petal, fidelity of shape and colour. The figure piper's aim is bound to be anatomy and natural poses, for his "figures" may include anything in the animal world and it is absolutely necessary for him to observe, and study as much as possible, the natural and varied attitudes of each and all of them—that is, if he intends to work up his own designs, instead of working on the observation of others. Here I think I may digress a little to explain this matter more fully, for there are different grades of piracy in our exhibitions as well as on the high seas. Now, looking at it from a standpoint of "right," I think that a student or anyone cannot be blamed for copying a design which may take his fancy, in glacé Royal, or any other medium, if by doing so he fancies he can improve himself. Or if he be in business, and he makes his copy good enough to sell—why not sell it? And if he should at any time be cornered as to the source of the design, I think it would be to his credit and his interest to tell the truth. Now, exhibition business is a different thing altogether, for if an exhibitor, after much time and patience and skill, works up a meritorious exhibit, which scores first prize, on its own merit, as a piece of original work, I contend that it would be absolutely out of place for some other exhibitor to present a counterpart of it for competition, say, the following year. "Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery"—but there's a line to be drawn for all that.

We will resume the methods to be aimed at. In the first place, I would advise all intending figure-pipers, of whatever age, to aim strongly at originality. I fancy I can hear someone exclaim, "Where can we get our designs?" Well, if I lived in London, I fancy I could get a dozen or so in St. James's Park, with its enormous variety of birds, its little bits of secluded

shrubbery, its boats, and kaleidoscope incidents—in fact, you can get subjects for figure-piping anywhere almost, while there is any life at all. Why, I was riding on a Putney 'bus down Piccadilly one day, and saw on the branch of an elm-tree which grows just inside the railings of the Green Park a wood pigeon with her nest and pair of young ones—a capital subject to go across a chocolate medallion. Another pretty subject—and this, too, may be studied almost any day in the summer time—is a little girl, basket in hand, feeding the waterfowl, scarcely half-a-mile from the scene of the woodpigeon's nest above described. This would be a copy, it is true ; but it is a copy from Nature, and it was such copies as this that made the name of Sir John Millais, Sir Frederick Leighton, and others whose names stand as monuments to British Art. Whatever would the Hanging Committee say if a painted copy of one of their works were presented for acceptance at the next year's Royal Academy exhibition ? Well, as far as reputation went, it strikes me very forcibly it would almost be a case of “ hanging ” for the would-be exhibitor.

I have stated on former occasions, and it will bear repeating for the benefit of those who study this fascinating subject for the first time, that if the designer has a liking for, or is already tolerably well skilled in freehand drawing, he is well on the road to success in figure piping ; and if he has a fancy for natural history, with keen observation and a good memory to boot, he has got pretty well all that is required, with the exception of a pot of glacé Royal, some paper cornets, and—perseverance.

I know perfectly well that a pupil who has any or all these qualities—the first-named being most important—in his composition, is far and away easier to teach than he who cannot use the lead pencil with good effect. In fact, the lead pencil and the paper cornet should, to use a common expression, go “ hand-

in-hand." Many a time where the means of piping has not been available, I have had recourse to a lead pencil, and jotted down on paper some little incident which has been passed as a likely subject. By this plan you can accumulate quite a number of subjects, which may be reproduced in sugar at any time, possessing a value of their own on account of their originality.

These, of course, may be introduced on Bride Cakes, Birthday Cakes or Christmas Cakes, petits fours, and in butter on hams, tongues, galantines, pressed beef, etc. Of course, a good deal of judgment is required in the choice of your subjects for any particular function, and what would be highly appropriate for a wedding would be tolerably "tame" for a hunting or golfing party. Any design may be suitably embellished with a few scrolls, and figure piping may also be judiciously blended with flowers occasionally, so that all these branches may work in conjunction with each other to gain an artistic end.

The intending figure piper never knows where he may cast his lot, and the very emperor of dramatic writers has told us that

There is a divinity that shapes our ends
Rough-hew them how we will.

Therefore, if it be your lot to be cast in a thoroughly representative fox-hunting district, surely the habitués of that district would better appreciate some fox-hunting designs than they would those that are relating to "Ping-Pong," and the devotees of this up-to-date pastime would prefer something in their line to anything bordering on footballs; so that if the piping artist can adapt himself to circumstances he is sure to attract, by his work, the attention of those who may employ him.

As I proceed, I intend giving the necessary details as to how artistic figure piping may be practised from the earliest to the last—no, not the last stage, for I shall never reach that goal myself. I must here inform the

•

reader that I am still learning, and no doubt will benefit, to some extent, by the undertaking I have in hand, which is for the purpose of bringing the reader up to the stage that I have arrived at. It will be necessary on the way to give some details in natural history, so that we try to avoid the common error, not only committed by some piping artists, but by taxidermists also, of perching a robin on a twig in the same attitude adopted by a Yorkshire canary, or flying doves with their crops so apparently full that they have naturally enough lost their equilibrium. No, let us endeavour to

Hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to Nature.

And the more natural in proportion and in pose we get our subjects the greater the pleasure it will be ; for remember that, in glacé Royal piping, unaided by colour of any kind, we have nothing but the shape and proportion to establish the identity of whatever animal or bird we have tried to represent. Of late years, landscape and seascape piping has been introduced into the decorative art, and to a very great extent the first-named is an almost indispensable comparison to figure piping, for distant hills have to be represented sometimes and foreground trees as well, in order to make up a picture in sugar. Now, as in the case of landscape painting, we have to manage the perspective by executing all the foreground objects boldly and all the distant objects faintly, by proper management and delicate handling the cornet can be made to pipe a row of poplar trees and a farmhouse which apparently stand at least a-quarter of a mile away from a mare and foal, which may be represented as grazing in the foreground.

Although I have mentioned here the subject of white piping only, there is also a system of coloured piping, which is most practised on chocolate medallions, Christmas cakes, birthday cakes, &c. The colouring of sugar for flowers is a recognised innovation, and therefore, by

way of variety, a "bit of colour" may occasionally embellish the figures"; but you cannot, for discretionary reasons, go too far with brilliant tints without drawing some objections from the "pure sugar" advocates. Vainly may you try to explain that the Spanish green is "*from spinach*," and that the blue and the red are equally harmless; but I think most of this prejudice is brought about by the violence of colour with which some eatables are "decorated." Some of our exhibitions will prove this, and severe and thoroughly deserved are some of the criticisms we read on this subject when the confectionery critic goes round, pencil in hand, just to give them a "bit of his mind." Pleasing effects may be obtained by a delicate handling of colour, and later on I intend giving instruction in this branch also, although, unfortunately, black and white photographic reproductions invariably convey a misleading impression as far as coloured designs are concerned, though fairly accurate when white sugar is used.



Chapter II.

OUTLINE—BIRDS.

HAVING made the principles of figure piping as plain as I can to the reader, I think it is time that I take him by the hand, so to speak, and proceeded with something practical. It is to be assumed that he already knows the simple method of mixing his glacé Royal, and the making of his paper cornets, for, if he is an absolute beginner in piping, I would not advise him to commence on figures ; but make himself, under tuition, a fairly skilled hand in the regulation work, as he will then be thorough master of the cornet, and be able to put on his fine strokes and heavy strokes, according to his will.

I think the easiest things to pipe in the figure line are birds, so we will take a couple for a start, and begin as I began many years ago, by doing plenty of outlines. I have already noted the great difference in birds, not only in size and shape, but in characteristic attitudes as well, and our first subject may as well be that familiar little harbinger of Christmas time—the robin. I have not the model of our little favourite by me at the present time, but I can see him in my “mind’s eye,” and commence thus, with a fine line from the paper cornet (Fig. 1). Commence at back of the head ; carry the line carefully down over the forehead, along the beak, under the lower mandible, down the breast to the point under the breast-bone, where the thighs commence, which must not be too far back in this instance, or it will upset the natural balance of a bird in this position. Leave off at this point, and take your cornet

back to the starting point ; now carry your fine line down the back to the root of the tail, and when your judgment will tell you that it is far enough for the body, make the tail with an upward tendency, which will do much to establish the bird's identity. Now recommence at the top of the thigh to meet the line under the tail. Although as yet the bird has no legs, you will plainly see if the body is in proportion, and, if so, you can add the legs—as in the illustration—the eye, and the wing also.



Plate I.—ROBINS.

This outline, when in the reproduction, will probably appear as if it were done with a fine white crayon ; but in reality it is a line in glacé Royal, and, unless otherwise stated, it is my intention to do all the subsequent designs in this medium, and originality will be another point aimed at.

In Fig. 2 we have the same bird, but in a different

attitude—*i.e.*, in the act of singing, and sitting the reverse way. A great many people find it somewhat difficult to do objects of this kind—looking from left to right; but this difficulty soon disappears with practice.

The method to be adopted in Fig. 2 is somewhat similar to the other—that is, to take your line from the back of the head over to the beak, and then after making a slight swelling in the throat, down the breast to the thigh. Indeed, the general instructions for No. 1 will do for No. 2; but it will be noticed at a glance how different are the positions of the two birds; and yet the reader has doubtless noticed them in these attitudes many a time and oft. Fig. 2 will almost answer for any bird in the act of singing. Something similar to it is adopted for the thrush, bullfinch, canary, &c.; but it must always be borne in mind that the two last named have a much thicker beak than the robin, and there is a great disparity in the bulk as well.

I must here remark that the majority of intending figure pipers are too impatient; they want, and expect, satisfactory results to appear at the first or second attempt, and if these results do not come at the third, fourth, or fifth attempt, they come to the conclusion that it is “a gift”; but they have not got that “gift,” and thereupon give up further efforts. This is a great mistake, for persistent practice, I contend, will accomplish wonders, and I have individuals in my mind, even now, who very nearly came to the above-mentioned stage of despair; but after sticking to it still further, the reward came to them eventually for their dogged perseverance, so that they can not only accomplish figures “for the shop window,” but even for exhibition work as well. So I say to the pupil—for whom these instructions are intended—“Go at it with a determination to succeed, for I can assure you that I have been most agreeably surprised at the head-

way some young fellows of my acquaintance have made.

We have seen how the robin and other birds may be done in outline while in a standing position. It will be as well to now give some idea as to the methods adopted for those when on the wing. Of course, the head is held much more forward, and the legs and feet doubled up under the lower part of the breast-bone.

The wings although appearing very natural in the finished study of a bird, will seem rather flat in the outline process ; but still it will convey the idea forcibly enough. Just the same that expression may be given in black outline drawing by a few strokes of the artist's pen : for be it remembered, we are but drawing—the glacé Royal taking the place of the ink, and the paper cornet taking the place of the pen, both have to go according to the will and skill of the operator ; and to accentuate still further the analogy between the two forms of artistic work, both are essentially started in the same way, namely, by a thorough knowledge of freehand, outline work, as a fore-runner of "filling-in" in the case of sugar, or light and shadow in the case of pen and pencil drawing.

While on the subject of birds, it will be as well to say something about the branches of trees and shrubs on which they sit. There is no hard and fast rule as to the correctness of outline in regard to the branch of a tree ; for, as the reader knows well enough, they vary so much that no one pretends to say they have a true form, but twist and turn in a most wayward and eccentric fashion. Still, whatever their form or thickness, the feathered denizens of the wood will pose on those twigs and branches in a way that Nature has taught them to be the best way. It, therefore, behoves the piping student to get these branches at the proper angle, and by judiciously narrowing it at the farther end he may give a good idea of perspective. Although it may seem to be, at the first glance, an un-

necessary detail to attempt to make a distinction in trees as far as piping is concerned, still, it is an easy matter to copy Nature to some extent even in this respect, as it is generally well known that the beech and horse-chestnut trees have a comparatively smooth bark, while that of the elm and oak is very rough, with a kind of mottled appearance at a distance. And as the majority of birds always have been and always will be associated with trees and their branches, it is as well to study them for the sake of making everything look in harmony when it comes to grouping, as we are but in the elementary stage yet, and I take it that the student is proceeding with those outlines, for the art of figure piping cannot be accomplished in the same off-hand manner as the ingredients of a pudding could be weighed out—put in a basin, mixed, and steamed for two hours; that would be an accomplished fact, and eventually an eaten pudding probably. But the subject we have in hand cannot be done in that way, so that it is no use dashing at it, but rather let the mind be steadily trained up to a pitch of enthusiasm, so that it is a pleasure to persevere, and thus no telling what excellent ideas will come in its train. It is this enthusiasm that brings on inspiration, to a great extent, in my opinion, and in this way our most eminent men—artists, novelists, poets—ah! and even confectioners, have at some time or other arrived at that pitch of excellence in handiwork which has caused the critics to declare, “Why, that is his masterpiece.”

In the management of leaves for ordinary piping—say, for the branches of the trees we have been describing—a small leaf tube might be used for some, while the plain paper cornet will answer the purpose for others. More elaborate leaf effects may be obtained by piping leaves on a slightly greased and bent surface, such as a piece of tin or a glass bottle, which leaves, when dry, are taken off in the bent state and

added to the work ; but, as our elementary designs are still on the outline principle, it will be sufficient to do them as indicated on the reproduction, while some instruction as to the more elaborate form of grouping will be given later on.

There is a diversity of opinion, however, among experts and critics, especially in the exhibitions, as to the “ piping off ” process ; for the ingenious “ piper off,” with his mechanical contrivances, can often get a



Plate 2.—ROBINS.

more “ taking ” effect than the first-class “ piper on,” who depends solely on his skill as a piper to get his effects, and most judges take this into consideration, and rightly award the prize where they see the most artistic merit without mechanical aid.

In Figs. 3 and 4 of these outline piping sketches, it will be seen that the position of the birds is entirely different to those preceding them ; and in the case of

No. 3 the idea of flying is entirely conveyed by the management of the wings, and the balance of the bird is dependent on them, whereas in the other three it depends on the legs. As before stated, if we get these too far forward or backward, the most inartistic observer can see there is something wrong with it, although he or she cannot for a moment guess the cause.

In Fig. 4 I have gone a stage further in outline work by introducing the frame or "skeleton," of a nest just to show why the bird is in that position with a small twig in its beak preparatory to the resumption of nest-building operations. All these birds may be piped according to the directions given for Fig. 1, and each, in turn, may be completed before the branch of the tree is introduced, for this reason :—if you do the branch of the tree first, you have to fit the bird to it ; and in endeavouring to do this you may get its feet a little too much to the right or left, or the legs too long or too short ; whereas, the bough on which you intend it to perch can very easily be brought up to the feet, and to get it in the right place, soon becomes an easy matter. The nest is easily managed, as it is but a bunch of irregular lines laid one over the other till proper formation is arrived at, always bearing in mind that the farther side of it must be made with rather faint streaks, while the part which is at the front must be in a rather bold and intertwining lines, which, if done too mathematically, does away with the natural appearance of the structure.

The few leaves which are represented are easily accomplished, and can be made with serrated edges or otherwise. As most of us who live in large cities are within easy distance of trees and shrubs of all kinds, a collection of leaves suitable for copying purposes, is always easily attainable, while those who live in the country will have them blowing in their backdoor : so there is no need to draw much on the imagination

in this respect. Indeed, the all-round figure piper would do well to make himself tolerably well acquainted with forestry and botany, as well as natural history; so that in a case of emergency, where copying studies are not available, he could make up a design by drawing on his knowledge of the above-mentioned subjects.

Making further advances in the subject we have in hand, it will be as well to form an outline group; and this may be managed by bringing isolated birds in various attitudes together. We will take as our design, on this occasion, a group of pheasants.

Now, pheasants—as the reader is probably aware—are of the gallinaceous order of birds, and in shape somewhat resemble the domestic fowl. I think they are slightly more difficult to “reproduce in sugar” than the average singing bird, but not much; and, although it is just possible that some of my readers have never seen one in the life, I can assure them that, the pheasant, when viewed in his natural surroundings at the corner of a wood, or walking with stately tread over the adjoining meadow, is a most magnificent bird; his inanimate remains, which may hang in the poulterer’s shop, convey no idea of his beautiful proportions and plumage while in the life. It is for this reason that I take him as a subject; moreover, it has the advantage of being comparatively rare “in sugar.” Swans, doves, and storks are becoming fairly plentiful, so let us try our hand on something for a change.

Supposing that we decide on a group of four birds. I will take them according to the way I have seen them, and trust to memory for the accuracy of details. This method is adopted for three reasons:—First is, because the nearest lot of live pheasants I know of is not within seven miles from where I am writing; the second is because—leaving the copyright question out of it altogether—it is not my intention to copy from



Plate 3 —PHEASANTS.

anybody ; and, thirdly, because originality will always stand out conspicuously in whatever branch of art you may take up.

Take a fine-pointed paper cornet first of all for the bird marked A, which is represented as a running pheasant. Start piping a fine line in a similar manner to that described in a previous chapter on small birds; but carry the breast line and left thigh further back, and the right thigh and leg more forward, as seen in outline above, as this conveys the idea of running ; for all game birds run in this way, which is a distinctive feature as compared with the mode of progression called hopping, as adopted by the jackdaw, the rook, and others of their kind. In Fig. B we have a pheasant in the act of flying ; the position is almost a repetition of a preceding outline sketch, but the shape of the body is different—the neck is longer, the head smaller in proportion to the general bulk, while the length of tail alters the general outline considerably. This may also be piped in the manner described for small birds, and may be repeated time after time, until the student gets the “ balance ” and general appearance to his own satisfaction. In Fig. C we have a very characteristic position adopted by the pheasant. With an upright and alert appearance he turns his head half round, as if on the look-out for some expected danger. Fig. D is another characteristic attitude, and with the last-named we have completed the details which will make up a group of pheasants. It would be as well for the student to make himself master of each and everyone of these “ units ” separately before grouping, as he may perhaps find that one or two positions will be comparatively easy of execution to him, while the remainder will be difficult, and the result indifferent. In this case, if one bird, which is sadly out of proportion, were grouped with three good ones, it would upset the “ arrangement.” altogether, and the average looker-on, although he may not be an

C



Plate 4.—GROUP OF PHEASANTS.

artist, is generally quite capable of picking out a flaw of this kind.

Taking it for granted, then, that the student can with confidence pipe any and every one of these elementary outlined pheasants separately, he may proceed to group them, as shown in Plate 4, and, by introducing a small indication of a bird in the distant horizon, it is easy to imagine that it may be a bird of prey, and that the pheasants are in a state of alarm in consequence ; and this, of course, constitutes the subject.

Mention has been made of the wood-pigeon on the elm tree branch overlooking Piccadilly. Let us see what we can do with that. It will serve as a useful lesson as showing the difference in shape of a pigeon and a bird of the thrush tribe, for in the absence of colour, or light and shadow, we have only got our outline to depend on. It is not a very elaborate subject, it is true, but it would do for variety's sake to go across a birthday or Christmas cake, and may take the fancy of somebody, for the wants of cake purchasers are extremely diversified. A case in point came to my knowledge quite recently, when a gentleman wanted cockroaches piped on a Christmas cake. This special request had to be executed in dark chocolate-coloured glacé Royal, and the effect may be imagined; but the purchaser was greatly pleased, simply because his wishes were carried out, and the "counterfeit presentment" of these culinary terrors had a life-like appearance.

Taking, then, the wood-pigeons and nest for a subject, we have got to bear in mind one or two facts in connection with these birds which may have escaped the notice of the average Metropolitan piper, although of late years (many thanks to the County Council and other bodies for it) these and other somewhat shy "Provincials" have made themselves quite at home in the parks ; they have learned to know that they

are treated with forbearance and kindness, and even protection, that they are perfectly safe from the pot-hunter's gun and the wildfowler's snare, the result being that the parks of London to-day can boast a greater variety of bird life than probably any other city in the world; and this fact gives the artistic student splendid chances, whether the medium employed is sugar, paint, or pencil.



Plate 5.—WOOD-PIGEON AND NEST.

The wild wood-pigeon, like its domesticated *confrère*, never lays more than two eggs for a sitting, but differs in his ideas of nest building, using a mere platform of twigs for the nest and a forked branch or stump of a tree for its support. The nest in Piccadilly was typical of this, and as there were a pair of strong-looking squeakers in it, which could be distinctly seen from the top of a Putney 'bus, the piping subject should make up quite a little family party. We will take his nest first, with a rather fine pointed paper cornet, and the glacé rather stiff. Some rather irre-

gular cross lines may be made, which may form a somewhat flattened platform sort of nest, with no more depth than there would be in an ordinary flower-pot saucer. Projecting from the interior of this may be piped in outline the head and shoulders of the young pigeons. These always have a very squabby appearance at whatever age, and are never associated with the word "pretty" as is the case with a brood of young chickens or ducks. The bough of the tree may now be introduced on which the nest is built, with sundry branches spreading out therefrom, which can be brought under the nest. The old bird can be piped on the bough, with little fear of a mistake as to distance, as the legs of a pigeon being comparatively short, so much measurement is not required as with the long-legged variety of birds, and the pupil will find, as he still further advances, his eye and judgment will become so trained that his proper distances will come to him with almost unerring certainty.

While our subject lies in the vicinity of the Green Park, suppose we—mentally—take a walk across it, cross the Mall, and see what we can find in way of a subject or two in the lake beyond. There are water-fowl in plenty, and many a little "tit-bit" for the purposes of a piping picture here. As if the London County Council had not provided sufficient variety in the shape of ducks, there may be found also a very large contingent of seagulls, which, free and unfettered though they be, make it their business of coming all the way from the briny ocean to share in the safety and the good things which are provided for them, not only by the authorities, but by philanthropic individuals as well—so that object lessons may be found in plenty, almost within the shadow of Buckingham Palace.

Now, ducks and swans being so much associated with the water, they are nearly always represented in their natural element, nearly half the body being submerged and legs and feet, to all intents and pur-

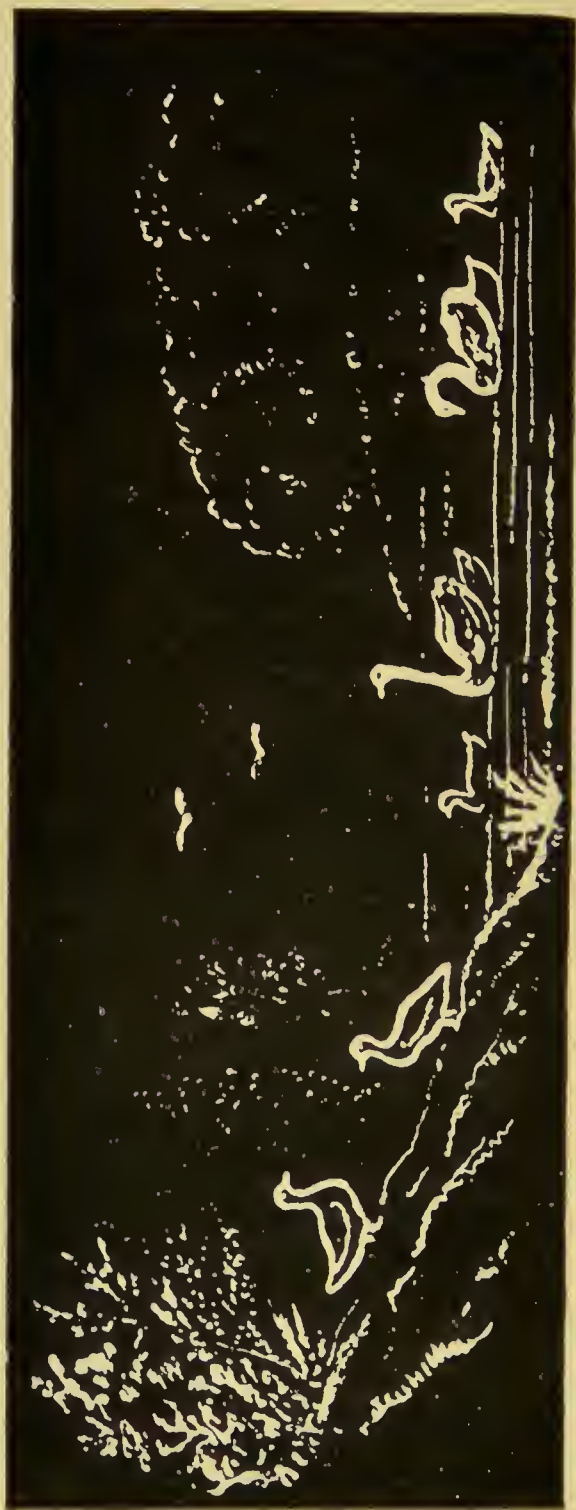
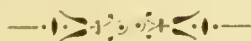


Plate 6.—DUCKS AND SWANS.

poses, invisible ; but still, they “ come on shore ” sometimes, and perhaps it will be as well to practise a few outlines, both in and out, as it will give a better idea as to proportions, for it will be noticed that the body of nearly all the aquatic birds is rather long in comparison with other members of the feathered tribe, while the legs of nearly everything in the duck line are much shorter in proportion to the body they have to carry.

In getting the effect of water for a piping sketch, it will be necessary to pipe a series of straight lines horizontally on your ground work, the distant part of the water being represented by short fine lines—not too numerous—while those in the foreground should be longer and thicker. This gives the idea of perspective, and although it is in sugar, it has the same effect as if it were done in pen-and-ink line drawing. The land, of course, should rise from the water at an angle more or less acute, according to the nature of the bank, which is to be represented, and, in the finished article, much more solid in appearance. But of that, more anon, as we are but in the outline stage at present, and these continued outlines will do more to foster a knowledge of bird and animal anatomy in the mind of a student than any other process I can think of, and plenty of practice will get the proper proportions so fixed on the operator’s mind that he will wipe out his subject with the greatest confidence and ease, so that the correctness of outline can be made apparent when viewed from the breadth of an ordinary room.



Chapter III.

OUTLINE—ANIMALS.

HAVING made as plain as I can the method to be adopted in piping the preceding outline sketches, I will leave the aquatic subject in the hands of the advancing student, and, as we have gone fairly well—as far as variety is concerned—into ornithological designs, I think we may venture to touch upon the borders of that boundless field for practice—the animal world. Here it is somewhat difficult to select anything for the initial stages as being easier of execution than its fellows—that being a matter of opinion. All are beautiful in design, and well fitted for their usefulness and their needs, and we as copyists from Nature have first of all to acquire an anatomical knowledge of the general form of our living model, and then crown that knowledge by a never-ceasing observance of its characteristic attitudes, so that we may, by a few slight pressures of the paper cornet, give expression to the animal we endeavour to portray. However, I think that the deer tribes have, from time immemorial, lent themselves to the causes of art, and, as far as I can see, are as easy as anything; but I would advise anyone to avoid, as much as possible, the study of those to be seen on some of the old tapestries, or reproductions, which we see occasionally in the illustrated papers from the pictures by the “old masters”; because, if these were taken from life, we can only come to the conclusion that the breed of stags in those days was very different to what it is now—and we don’t want to study deer as they *were*, but as

they *are*. It is not very easy for the young piper to study these beautiful creatures from life, unless he happens to live within easy distance of such places as Windsor or Richmond Park. True, the Londoner can view a few specimens in the Zoological Gardens ; but they are mostly foreigners, and, of course, are not seen at their best within a wired enclosure, although even that is an opportunity which should not be lost sight of ; and, failing that we can all have the benefit of the great and accurate pictures which England's greatest animal painter—Sir Edwin Landseer—has left behind for our admiration and our education. Supposing, then, for a start, we take a couple of deer—the ordinary red deer of deer-stalking fame—wild and unfettered in his Highland home. We have few opportunities of seeing him, so we have to draw a little on the imagination and the description of those who have. True, he is used for stag-hunting in England, but on entirely different conditions to the first named sport ; for here he is deprived of his horns, and kept in a semi-domesticated condition, taken to the place of meeting in a cart, released, and, after a time limit, the hounds are laid on his track. He seldom gets killed, however, ; for, when he has had enough of the sport, he usually trots into some farmhouse or out-building, is recaptured, and lives to run another day.

To commence the subject I have selected, take a fine-pointed cornet, with the usual amount of Glacé Royal therein, and start piping the top part of the head of stag, which is intended to represent one that is looking the other way ; in this position I think it advisable to complete the head, including the antlers, before starting with the body. Now take your line down the front part of the neck to the lowest point of the shoulders, and then another line from the back of the neck over the withers to the root of the tail, then over the haunch down to the hock of the left leg, which it will be noticed is slightly forward. The fore

legs may now be completed, and the line brought under the stomach, the left hind leg finished, and the right hind leg slightly extended backward, as if suddenly brought up to the halt by something which has attracted the animal's attention. The tail can now be added, and a very brief inspection will suffice to convince the student if this outline figure is in proper pro-



Plate 7.—PIPED STAG.

portion, always remembering that a stag has a rather "tubby" appearance about the body in proportion to the thinness of his legs. He does not appear to be symmetrically built for speed, like the racehorse or greyhound, for instance; but he can go for all that. His mate, the hind, which is represented on the left, may be piped first from the top of the head and down to the throat; the ears may then be put on, and the

line for the back of the neck brought down over the withers along the back, over the rump, and down to the back of the forelegs which may now be put in ; then the stomach and the hind legs completed, and this will constitute the first outline group in the animal life. Of course, there is a variety of positions in which we may pipe a stag, and, later on, these will be touched upon : but while the student is learning the one thoroughly, he is laying in a store of ability to branch off in whichever way his fancy leads him.

We will now take for our object-lesson, that good all-round servant of man—the horse. Although we need not go far afield to get our model this time, he is by no means so easy to accomplish as his plentitude would imply—for there are horses *and* horses ; they have not got that “ turned out of the same mould ” appearance that stags have, but the variety is very great indeed, while some that we may see in our travels are just beyond the attentions of the R.S.P.C.A., and others there are, though sound in wind and limb, are anything but “ things of beauty.” Still, we must make our selection, and as the average Englishman invariably prides himself on some sort of knowledge of our equine friend, it is to be assumed that the reader will know what sort to select and that to avoid when he comes to originate his own subjects.

We will take for our model the ordinary hack. He is, perhaps, the most plentiful, and although even he possesses various degrees of form, his general shape is such as to call forth the oft rehearsed title of “ a useful looking nag.” I propose to delineate him to the best of my ability in the act of standing, trotting, and leaping—and by following out the instructions in regard to the stag, the reader may accomplish the outline work of this and most other subjects in the animal line. The horse standing is intended to

represent one in a field—turned out to grass, in fact—without halter or trappings of any kind. By simply placing the ears slightly forward it will convey the idea of “Expectancy,” or that his attention has been drawn to some distant object, such as his owner or driver coming through the gate.



Plate 8 —THREE HORSES IN OUTLINE.

The horse trotting I have done by completing the head first to the back of the ears, the line has then been drawn down the back of the neck, over the withers, along the back, over the rump, and down to the “near” or left fetlock joint. The paper cornet is then taken to the base of the jawbone, the throat, or front part of the neck is put in, and the line carried along the extended left foreleg to the point of the hoof. By looking at this it will be found that the top line of the horse is complete, and you will see pretty clearly at this stage if the back is likely to be too long or too short. If satisfactory, the left foreleg may be completed, and the line carried under the stomach with a slight curve upwards, as it nears the flank, and then the under line of the extended left hind leg, including the hoof. We have now what appears to be the extended half of a horse with but two legs—and can see plainly enough if it is going to be a failure when complete by the proportion of all the parts delineated; if apparently satisfactory, we put in the “off” or right legs, slightly doubled up

under the stomach as shown, the tail can then be added and the eye. I have gone into these details because I have an idea that there are, perhaps, more critics on the points of a horse and his action than on any other animal living. Every Englishman seems to be a judge, more or less, and great are the arguments, friendly or otherwise, even among experts in horseflesh, although they would not bestow a glance or waste an opinion on the most perfect cow.

However, we are not experts, but only casual observers, and we will try and get our models as they are, if we can. It will be as well, however, to note that there does not seem to be so much argument about a trotting horse as one that is galloping, and photography itself seems to settle the arguments pretty clearly about the first-mentioned mode of propulsion, for, judging by the snapshots, I find the legs of the trotter are very often placed as the artist draws them, and as we are accustomed to see them in our daily walks. But it is not so with galloping; so rapid is the motion that we cannot follow the legs with our eye, so the artist has to draw a good deal from his stock of imagination, and the accuracy of that is very often greatly upset by the unerring snapshot, which "fixes" the striding racehorse in perhaps the hundredth part of a second. What do we see then? A horse with head almost erect, his hind legs extended, one of his forelegs extended, and the other in a vertical position with the hoof touching the ground looking, at the distance, as if he were poised on a broomstick, and three-parts of the weight being behind—looking like some equine experiment to defy the laws of gravitation. That this position was correct when the snapshot caught him is beyond doubt; but we need not copy it for all that, for he was but the fraction of a second in that position, and we can select others which will better answer our purpose. Moreover, if some great artist were to

exhibit a painting of last year's Derby winner passing the post in the position, say, at this year's Royal Academy Exhibition, the least they would say of him would be that he was bordering on the "eccentric," correct though he might be.

We will now proceed with the horse that is jumping. In adopting this position, I do not think we are trespassing on the impossible or the improbable, as our vision is capable of taking in the attitude of the jumper. Moreover, that lightning detective, the camera, "snaps" him in similar form; so that with such an ally at our side, we may venture to proceed.

The horse's head may be piped in first, as in the preceding case; and, in doing the line for the back, great care should be observed to bring it nicely downwards, because our horse, this time, is rearing, so to speak, from the ground, and his great thigh muscles have propelled him upwards and forwards. We have to get the angle of his backbone according to the height he is supposed to be jumping, and, of course, his legs and stomach have to be treated accordingly. Having got the back line down to the root of the tail, carry it down to the hock, and thence to the point of the hoof—which is supposed to be about a foot from the ground. A line may then be made from under the jawbone down the chest, and the bent fore-leg put in, the line taken under the stomach to the flank, and then the hind leg completed. Here we may see if any alteration is necessary, and, if not, the other two legs may be added, the tail, and the eye also. As an accessory to this, a rustic fence may be added, and even in the placing of this some discernment is required, for, if you get it too far forward, the horse will have the appearance of overreaching himself and doomed to come down on the top of it; on the other hand, if you get it too far back, it will have an impossible look, and give the animal the appearance of flying, instead of leaping. I think the best effect

can be obtained by piping the first or foreground post of the fence somewhere under the hoof of the foreleg, and then, by a little management of perspective, take the rails under the stomach, just about where the saddle girth or the stirrups would be and just a medium distance below them. This detail may seem somewhat unimportant; but, simple though it seems, it is really surprising what a difference even the eighth of an inch will make in the placing of these posts and rails, and it is always best to do them after the horse is completed, as it is far easier to alter them, if necessary, than it is to alter him to suit the rails.



Plate 9.—OUTLINE OF LADY FEEDING PIGEONS.

As we are now rapidly nearing the end of the outline stage of figure piping, it will be absolutely essential to touch on the "human form divine." There are innumerable other outlines which might be practised; but I think the student—be he of average ability—might be almost left at this juncture to choose his own subjects. If still more elementary outline work is needed, and if he has thoroughly "grasped" the methods and can turn the specimens out to his own satisfaction, at the present stage, why a wide field is open to him for further progress, which needs no introduction. The human figure, though almost ever present for study, is, perhaps, more diffi-

cult than anything else in the way of piping—in fact, we might consider that we are bordering on the “classical” stage when we can manage the *genus homo*; but still there are various degrees we can touch upon before we arrive at the culminating point.

In piping a human being, it will generally be found that the face is the most difficult—especially in three-quarter or full-face; in profile, a fairly good expression can be obtained, and even that with the greatest possible care; but as our mission is now on outlines, we will leave that for a brief space, and study more in proportions. We will take for our subject a lady feeding pigeons, and, without ignoring the animal world altogether, what more appropriate than a dog of the St. Bernard kind looking on as an interesting spectator? A few fowls may also be introduced, and these will complete the subject. First of all pipe the outline forming the lady's hat, and then the head; the back and front lines may then be gracefully brought down to ankles, and the lower part of the skirt completed. A lady friend of mine has told me that my feminine ideals are not quite up to date in regard to the fashions; this may be so, and I fully appreciate this little bit of friendly criticism, with a promise to study the fashion-plates a little more than I have hitherto done. Having got your back and front lines completed, the arms may heighten the effect. The pigeons and fowls can be piped in, and lastly the dog.



Chapter IV

BAS RELIEF.

AND now, seeing that we have gone through a fair number of outline studies, preparatory for the more important part of filling in, we will commence with what we may call—

SKETCHES IN BAS RELIEF.

Here we have to study the anatomy of whatever we intend to portray in a more intensified form than hitherto, as, within the finest of outlines, while yet wet, the body has to be “squeezed” with light pressure for comparatively flat parts and heavier pressure for the more prominent or muscular parts. The glacé Royal must not be so stiff for this purpose as you would have it for string work on a wedding cake, neither must it be “sloppy,” but just so that it will settle down nicely.

To make a start, we will take a spaniel dog and pheasant, which will be an appropriate design for almost any sporting function, or, indeed, a Christmas cake, as, during the festive season, there are plenty of purchasers who have sporting proclivities. Though the outline of a dog has been given before, it was of a different type and position; so to make a repetition of it would be useless. For this purpose moreover, we want it looking the reverse way, and for the purposes of earlier stages of Bas Relief we had better still commence fine outlines, filling the body in afterwards. Pipe the head looking upwards and the ears rather inclined forward, and after the body

line and legs are completed you may commence to fill in. Although we have a good indication of the ear at this stage, it will be as well to leave its final touches till the whole picture is dry or nearly so, as, considering the rather soft state of the glacé Royal it will not do to overload it, or it might break bounds and spread too far each way. Having so far completed the dog by filling in those parts which consti-



Plate 10.—SPANIEL DOG AND PHEASANT.

tute the shoulders, ribs, hind quarters, &c., as in illustration, the pheasant may now be put in. It is not flying in the same direction as those previously depicted, and, as it is going from left to right, it will be slightly more difficult of manipulation. When the head, body, and tail are finished, it will be as well to let them dry before adding the wings, for the same reasons mentioned in connection with the dog's ears; and while they are drying, the blades of grass, fern leaves, trunk of tree and branches may be added.

For some of these, a small quantity of the glacé Royal may be separated and a little more sugar added in order to make it stiffer, for some of the blades of grass and stems of fern leaves require to be rather fine to give it a natural effect.

Care should be taken as much as possible to get the relative proportions of dogs and birds or horses and men, when grouped together, especially where represented in the foreground, as it tends to make a distinction in breed and size: for instance, if the dog represented above was intended to be a retriever, he would have to be made larger, while the pheasant would remain the same.



Plate II.—A DOUBTFUL STARTER.

It is not usual to introduce the comic element in cake decoration, but at Christmas time, when happiness and merriment are rife, and good wishes to that end are plentiful enough, a few subjects bordering on the comic are admissible. So I introduce one here, which will explain itself; it should be piped on a dark ground—chocolate for preference—either in

medallion form — or chocolate icing run in an oval or a circle on the top of the cake. The mule may be piped first, on the same principle as mentioned previously, and the men afterwards and if the icing is rather soft it will be as well to let their bodies dry before adding the arms. The reason for this is obvious, for whereas the muscles of a horse or dog are blended in, so to speak, with the surrounding flesh, the arms of a man are “hung on” as it were, and, therefore, stand out from the body; therefore, they should be piped on after the body is dry to give the high relief that is necessary. Care should be taken in getting the correct distances of the men from the animal, otherwise the general idea of “pushing” and “pulling” will be lost.



Plate 12.—“WON BY A LENGTH.”

Another design with a sporting title might be here introduced. It is an incident which might be seen in any country district where rabbits abound, and it might as well figure in a piping sketch as in any other form of illustration. It is almost needless to relate the circumstances, but briefly the rabbit has been surprised in his feeding ground by a fox terrier, and

a terrible race for life has been the result ; but although a good distance had to be covered, and a fence negotiated between "bunny" and his burrow, he has succeeded at the finish and "Won by a Length."

In piping small subjects, there are times when you may venture to "squeeze" out the miniature animals without going over the perfect outline first, and this fox terrier, with body and legs extended, may be treated in that way. The head and neck may be done first, a little extra pressure for depth of shoulder and thickness of barrel, finer round the loins, and then the thigh with the hind leg extended. The posts and rails will form a short lesson in perspective piping—for we have to make them fairly substantial in the foreground—and gradually lessen or melt away to the distance. In order to do this, we must get the first post high and solid in comparison with the rest, and keep shortening them, and making them thinner as they recede. It is necessary to manage the horizontal rails, too, in a similar way. The intervening span between the fence and burrows may be piped in a series of irregular curved lines, for we want it to appear like a ditch ; the grasses and ferns in the bank on the left should be piped in with icing which has been made a little stiffer than that used for the animals, and the branches of the tree will require the same medium.

Yet another "serio comic" subject may be introduced, in which again the popular fox terrier is in evidence, in which, too, his arch enemy the domestic cat has to use her climbing powers to get out of his way. It will serve as a companion picture to the foregoing ; moreover, it will make a variation in the attitude of dogs under different conditions. I think in this group it is as well to finish the tree first, and then introduce the cat on the branch, this being the main object in the picture. The right-hand dog can then be piped, especial care being taken in the head,

as he is supposed to be looking intently upwards, and his ears may be placed rather forward so as to convey the impression that the whole of his attention is "focussed" on the one spot. As in the case of the preceding terrier, the body may be piped without the assistance of a complete outline, or with it,



Plate 13.—DOGS AND CAT—"WAITING FOR THEE."

according to the advance the student may have made, and the method adopted above will answer equally well for this. The dog on the left, which is partly hidden by the trunk of the tree, may now be piped, care being taken to get the head well elevated, as also with his companion on the other side. The irregular strokes, which represent the ground, will

by this time cause little difficulty to the student, always bearing in mind the bold strokes for the foreground and the fine ones for the background. Here is introduced a small stream at the foot of the tree ; it serves to break up the continuity of the ground, and slightly adds to the rustic appearance of the scene. Very faint outlines of a cottage in the distance may be lightly added, when the subject, as a piping sketch, may be considered complete.

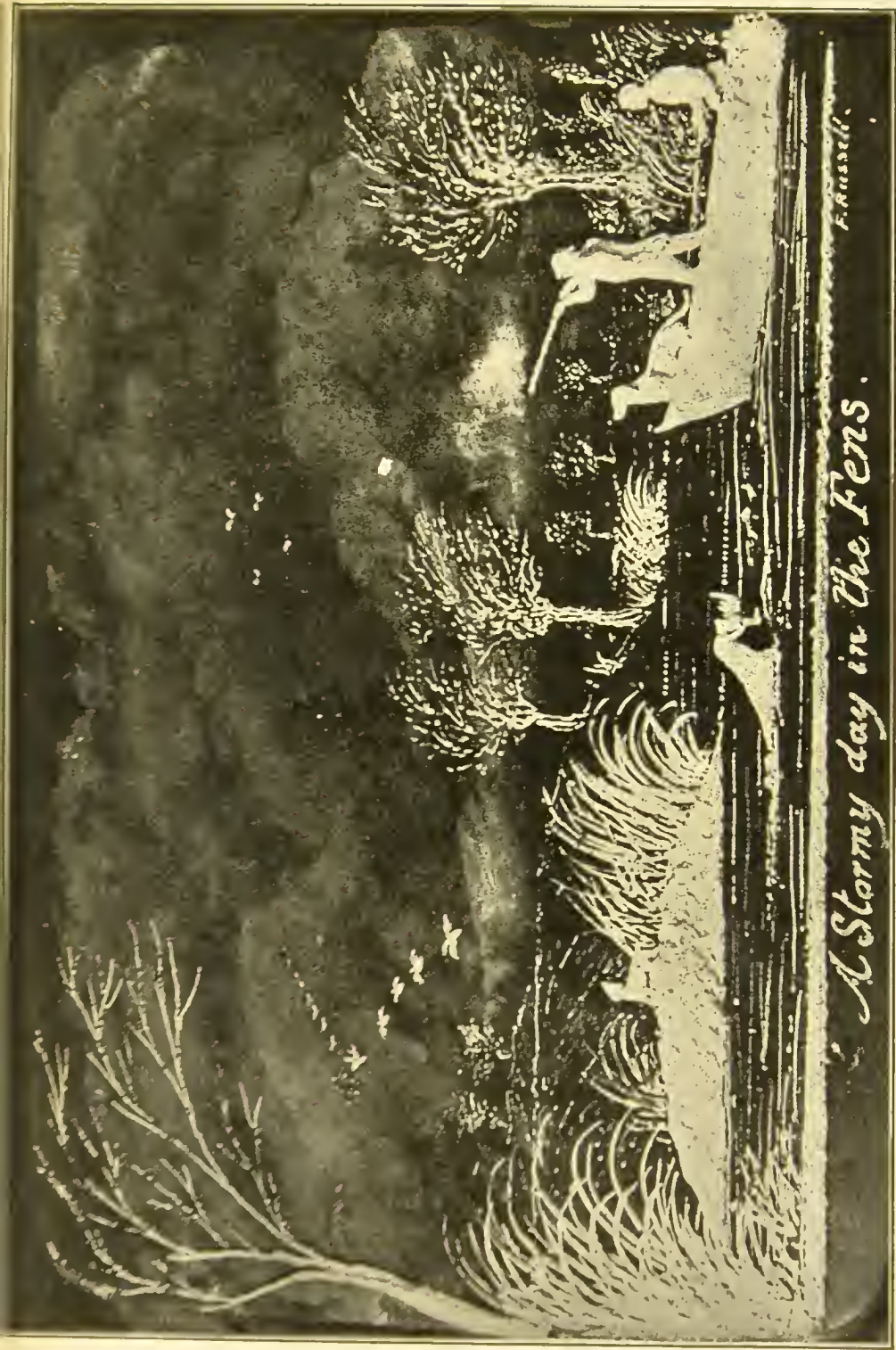


Plate 14.—MAN IN THE SNOW.

Before advancing towards more extended designs, one more minor subject may be given—bordering as it is, on the comic side. Mr. Phil May has given us many ludicrous types of men under the heading "Songs and their Singers"; but this little

snow scene is not intended in any way to clash or "pirate" his creations, but simply to stand or fall on its own merits or demerits, as a freak of fancy. It has appeared many times on Christmas and other cakes, and, in the eyes of a certain section of buyers, it is held just as "taking" for the festive season as the more prosaic "Robin on the twig." The method of doing this subject is fairly simple, the man with the heavy stick being piped in first, after which a heavy ground may be done, and before this is allowed to dry, a few rather long indentations may be made to represent the "Footsteps in the Snow"; the leafless trees in the background may be added, and numerous small flaky dots distributed all over the surface, which will give it a rather realistic effect.

Coming to a more complicated, and therefore a more ambitious, subject altogether, it will be advisable for the pupil to provide himself with a fairly large surface of some kind to practice on—such as the back of an ordinary black tea-tray. The subject itself is not exactly taken from life, but is mainly drawn from the imagination, as a result of reading descriptions in the sporting press of this class of shooting. We have had, in the preceding sketches, dogs in various attitudes on land: this last design will serve if only to illustrate them for an aquatic purpose, and by grouping these and several other "items" together make up a picture in sugar which will tell its own tale. This is a subject which may be started anywhere almost, but perhaps, the boat and its occupants should receive our attention first, as we can then "draw" up to it from the left afterwards. Proceed, then, to pipe the boat first and the man who is shooting next, to be followed by the man who is seated, also the dog; the reeds may then be added, and the best method of doing these is to start at the base of the stem, and, with a graceful sweep, bring them to a point—the majority of them bending to



A Stormy day in the Fens.

Plate 15.—“A STORMY DAY IN THE FENS.”

the breeze in one direction. The stems at the base should be kept fairly level, as they have to be represented as growing in water; and, to give this effect, rather irregular horizontal lines have to be piped, longer, and fairly thick, in the foreground, and fewer and less numerous as they recede. The dog swimming with a bird in his mouth can be piped in now, also the small reedy island with the water spaniel on it. I have omitted to state the cloudy effect has been obtained simply by rubbing some fine dry icing sugar on the ground work with the forefinger, and it is as well to do this really before any piping is put on at all, or it can be left out entirely—just as a matter of taste. The flock of wild fowl, which we may imagine have been driven from their hiding place by the dogs, will be now introduced, and one or two of them must bear unmistakable evidence of having been “hard hit” by the gunner, and, therefore, should be depicted well in the line of fire from the fowling-piece.



Chapter V

MENUS.

As figure piping lends itself readily to this class of work, there is a wide field for design not only for present day functions, but those of the future as well. These may be piped in a variety of forms, and the groundwork for piping on may be silk, satin, velvet, tinted cardboard, or any other foundation that will take kindly to icing sugar. Taken altogether, this class of decoration depends more on the artistic taste of the piper than most of the other branches, because you have to study the effect of different tints in your background and the unaided effect of the piping itself. In the case of a Christmas or other cake, a few silver leaves, comfits, or gum paste novelties, may with impunity and advantage be added, which, of course, would "soften" down the attention from any possible defect in the piping. But in the work on the menu you have to take great care, as the slightest mistake is not very easily rectified, or, at least, it has a "nasty habit" of leaving a slight stain behind it. But the pupil who makes up his mind to go on a few "trial trips" first could not do better than get a large school slate and mark it out in lines similar to illustration. He could practise his writing in the small space and the figures round the margin. It is almost needless to state that this suggestion for a piped menu is not intended to supersede the printed article—at least, not in the original, as, of course, it would be much too large for the table; but if neatly framed and hung at the end of dining-room, it is not altogether



Plate 16.—DESIGN FOR PIPED MENU, ETC.—PHEASANT SHOOTING.

unappropriate for the occasion. Moreover, impressions or reproductions may be made by the half-tone process which would at least recommend itself for a special occasion, if only on the score of novelty, and could then be brought down to a size suitable for use on the table. In this class of work it behoves the piper to make himself pretty well acquainted with most of the prominent points of the British sports and pastimes, with the addition of naval, military, and other scenes; so that if it should be his intention to pipe a menu for a Golf Club dinner, for instance, he could illustrate that menu with such scenes as "Driving from the Tee," "Bunkered," "A Long Putt," and so forth. It is the same with other scenes, and novelties of this kind will invariably take the eye of exponents of a game—be it Golf, Football, or Cricket.

The menus we are now going to treat are military and aquatic, and we will take the "aquatic" first. The reader will see at a glance that this sketch is intended for the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race. The original is on a dark and light blue background, which makes this fact more evident still. The various details of this design were gained by direct observation, for a good many years ago I lived not very far from Putney Bridge, and used to see the crews in training. At that time, however, the idea of turning any of those scenes into a piping design never for a moment occurred to me; but rough pencil sketches were taken all the same, and from the recorded memories thus obtained this aquatic menu was designed.

In piping a series of sketches of this description, it is essential to collect your incidents and then let them illustrate the progress of the contest in rotation. The first scene, "Training," is not very difficult. The trotting horse with the trainer, or "coach," on his back may be piped in first, and then the heavy irre-

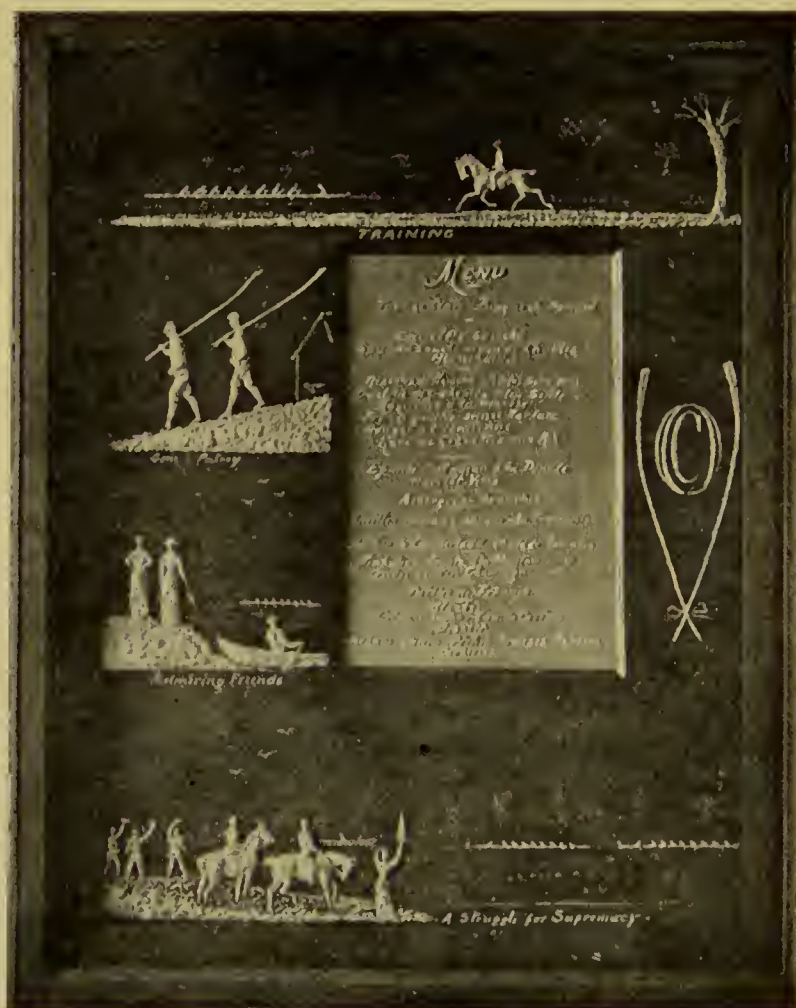


Plate 17.—AQUATIC MENU.

gular lines which represent the river bank, a series of fine lines to represent the water in the river, and on this a long low boat or outrigger, with faint indications of nine men in the boat as represented ; a very faint outline of distant trees (which has to be done with a very fine pointed paper cornet) will indicate the opposite bank, and the willow tree may be boldly done in the foreground to complete the first sketch. "Gone to Putney" represents two of the oarsmen going down to the river from the direction of the boat-houses to embark in their frail craft, which is presumably waiting for them for a practice spin towards Barnes Bridge. In the third sketch we have two young ladies at the edge of one of the numerous creeks, who may be sisters, cousins, or otherwise, of certain members of the crew who are now practising in the upper reaches of the river. These may be piped without the preliminary outline, as also the solitary oarsman who has just arrived on the scene. Here, as in previous designs, the necessity of perspective piping will be apparent, for, since our medium is glacé Royal without any blending of neutral tints, we have to get the distant effect by the sole means of reducing the scale of our objects.

There is considerably more work in the last sketch of this series, although the difficulties are not so great as they may appear at first sight, for it is only a matter of grouping, what the student has been practising in detail during the earlier part of these instructions. "A Struggle for Supremacy" is just such a scene as may be witnessed in the vicinity of Barnes Bridge on any boat-race day, when the leading crew with stern determination are holding their lead, while the others are putting forth almost superhuman efforts to reduce it. It is a matter of small moment which of these figures may be piped first—perhaps the horses, and, as they are looking partly from left to right, they may be less easy than those looking the reverse.

way. While these horses are drying, the spectators on foot may be added one by one, with a few irregular lines to indicate where the groundwork of the river bank is going to be ; fine horizontal lines, too, for the river may be added, and then the distant boats. When the horses have become partly dry, the riders may be piped on—care being taken that they sit as naturally as possible. The river bank (or towing path, as this part is generally called) may be completed with plenty of “ body ” in that part which is nearest to you.

The second menu—which is designed for military functions, and especially those in relation to cavalry—is introduced here by way of variety, and a glance will suffice to show the difference in subjects as compared with the other. This is as well, for the various scenes include a goodly number of horses in various positions: each and every one of these the pupil can copy singly if he chooses. Natives of the Metropolis will scarcely need an explanation as to the first scene; but for the benefit of the far away provincial, it may be stated that Hurlingham, which is the home of aristocratic pastimes, lies on the fringe of London in the Fulham district. It is here that polo is to be seen at its best—a pastime which is adapted to, and adopted by, most cavalry regiments. So the first scene on the menu represents rival military teams at this equestrian game. These horses may be piped as in the past, and allowed to get tolerably dry before adding the riders to them. Care, of course, must be taken in making the riders in their correct attitudes, so as to give life and spirit in the scene as far as lies in our power. Sketch No. 2 represents a trooper practising outpost duty at Aldershot; while the third is intended for the military charger at full gallop with his rider in a tent-pegging competition at the Agricultural Hall during the annual Military Tournament. The next step of the professional soldier is, as we may assume, “ Foreign Service,” and there are, perhaps,



more difficulties in the delineation of this subject than in any of its predecessors, for in piping, with nothing but the white icing, we cannot very well get one animal behind the other with any degree of accuracy in all details, so we have to use outlines only for some of the offside horses, which method, although its result appears somewhat "sketchy," will convey the idea more forcibly than if two solid horses were merged into one. It will be seen by this last sketch that the team of artillery horses is represented in a hilly country; therefore, the leader should be first piped and well elevated, so that those in the rear are much lower when they are completed. The officer's charger, in advance, too, should be well up the hill, and the groundwork must be piped slanting downwards, with a couple of trees of the palm variety on top, just to give it that foreign aspect which we intend to convey. A very faint undulating line will give a "shadowy" idea of distant mountains, while a couple of bursting shells from the enemy's artillery will give a realistic touch to the scene. Perhaps I may be permitted to state in behalf of the art of figure piping generally, that these menus we have just had under consideration, have been successful beyond the designer's expectations, having been awarded a special silver medal—appreciated the more from the fact that it was presented by Mr. J. Szanyo, the King's confectioner—at the Universal Cookery Exhibition, Royal Albert Hall, London, 1902, and the first prize (gold medal) for "The most Artistic Piece of Work of any kind," at the International Confectionery Exhibition, Royal Agricultural Hall, London, 1902.

Although we have had two menus under consideration, I think there is yet room for another, as it is variety of design we want, and may as well have it on a menu as on anything else. As this has been done partly in colours, the reproduction is not so



Plate 19.—PATRIOTIC MENU.

clearly defined; but, perhaps, a little explanation will assist the reader. It is intended for a patriotic menu. In the original it is headed by "God Save our King," then a crown, which is piped in yellow to represent the gold, and crimson to represent the velvet. Two doves are flying towards it with sprigs of laurel as emblems of peace. The crown is supported by the Rose, Shamrock, and Thistle, in colours. At the head of the menu proper, is the Prince of Wales's feathers, which is flanked by leeks emblematic of Wales; and from the ribbon at the base, spring two Union Jacks in colours, then follows the menu itself in italics. The sketches which flank the menu proper, are respectively "Epsom," "Sandringham," "Aintree," and "Cowes," while the last scene is Boer and Briton shaking hands, entitled, "Peace," so that the idea is to represent the British sports in which His Majesty takes a great interest. The menu itself is piped in white, on a red ground, which is edged with gold, and the wide margin around it is a Royal blue, the figure piping being in white. We thus have a combination of red, white, and blue. It is, perhaps, not necessary to go into detail as to how this is done, as a glance of the method adopted in the previous designs will suffice; but this is simply to illustrate another of the uses of Figure Piping. As reference has been made to piping in colours, however, I may mention here that in certain subjects some very good effects may be obtained; but for anything which is intended to be eaten, of course, our range of colours are somewhat limited—or at least, among those which may be pronounced "harmless" in this category, I think we are allowed to dabble a little in pale green, yellow, pink, and brown, or chocolate, and some very novel effects can be got up even with this limited array, especially in the Christmas cake or chocolate medallion line. While, if we go beyond the eatable stage, and go in for piped menus or framed pictures

for our shops, or sitting-rooms, we can almost get up an effect like a water-colour drawing, the only difference is the piping picture has the additional novelty of being in bas relief, which has rather a taking effect when viewed from a short distance with a side-light shining upon it. These, too, will last for very many years if kept in an ordinary dry room, so that the artistic confectioner may vary the monotony of always making something for somebody else to destroy.

In mixing coloured icing for a landscape, for instance, two or three shades of green may be made; but, as in water-colours, nothing should be too "glaring"; a few drops of Browning or "Black Jack" will always sober down a too brilliant green, and a little extract of saffron added will make another shade, and a knowledge of each, with the "happy medium" thrown in, will be beneficial "assets" towards the art of Figure Piping in colours. The methods to be adopted in the arrangement of the various tints will be greatly simplified if the operator has a slight knowledge of the general use of colours, as he will then know where to place them to get the best effect.



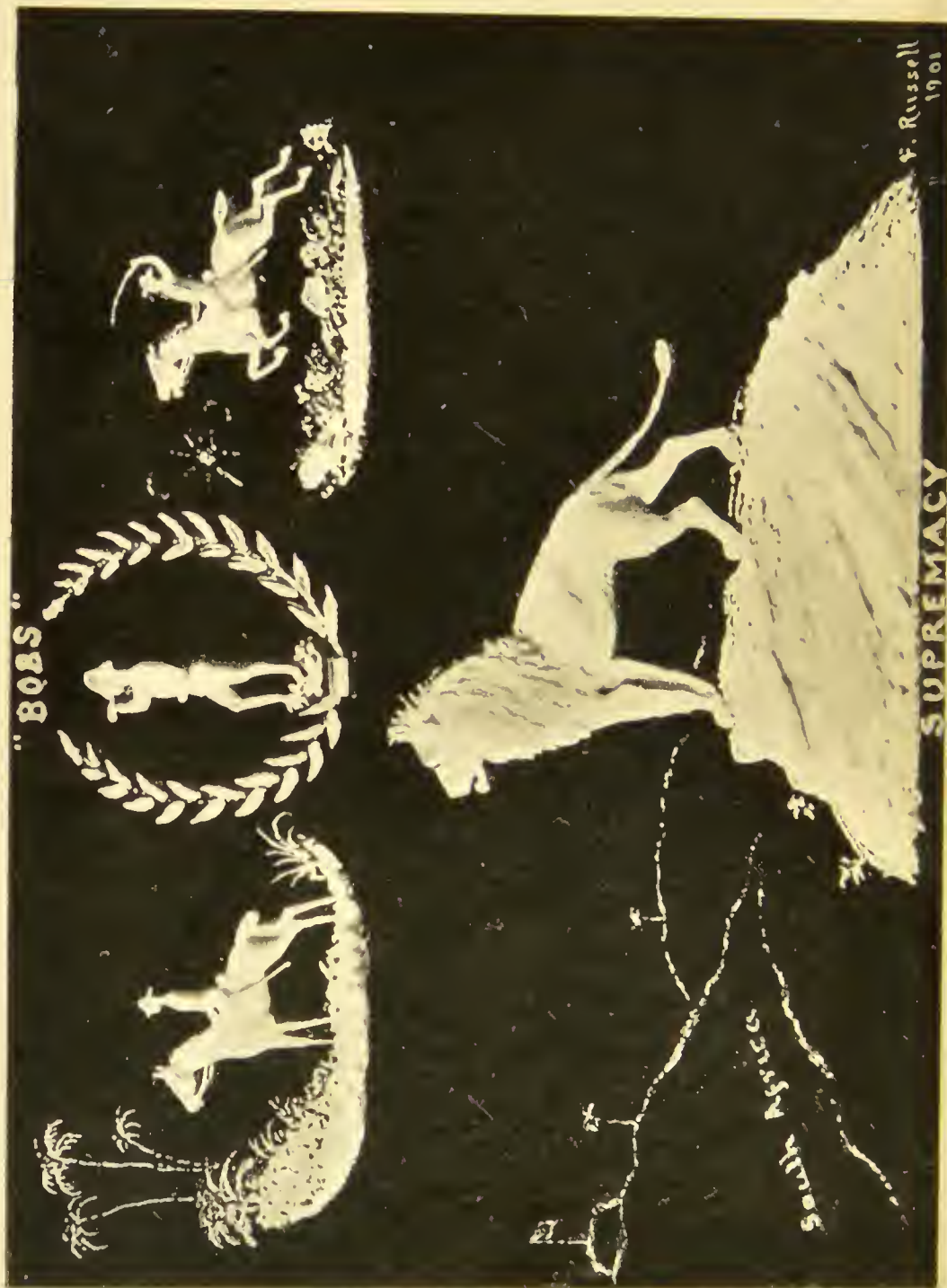


Plate 20 —A REMINISCENCE OF THE BOER WAR.

Chapter VI.

MISCELLANEOUS.

BEFORE closing this little book, it may be as well to present the reader with a few more illustrations, and a brief explanation concerning them.

The following illustration of a piping study is from the original, which was designed at the time that Great Britain was in the thick—or, rather, at the waning point—of the Boer War. It will be too much repetition for me to describe over again the methods to be adopted in piping these figures, but briefly the top left-hand figure was intended to be that of the ever-popular Baden-Powell, watching for the relief column which eventually accomplished its purpose. It is needless to describe the central figure in the top line, as he will be a backward eight-year old schoolboy who does not recognise, or feel a certain thrill of pride at the very utterance of the name of, "Bobs." The equestrian figure on the right was originally intended for the Earl of Airlie, for he bravely met his death when charging the enemy at the head of his Lancers. The remainder of the design will explain itself.

Our next study is a group of designs illustrating some important episodes in the life of a fox, the central figure showing the poultry-loving and "crafty gentleman" himself in the act of carrying off his prey. "Notice to quit" follows, and so on to the moment of retribution, when his misdeeds are finally expiated under the woodland tree. This group was



Plate 21.—EPISODES IN THE LIFE OF A FOX.

piped all white on a chocolate ground, and was the forerunner, in a sporting sense, of the more ambitious work which is given on page 66. It was in coloured piping, and was more in the nature of a *bona fide* picture in glacé Royal.

ON BUTTER AND LARD PIPING.

Except for practice, or, perhaps, with some uneatable speciality for a Christmas show, I would not advise the use of lard for piping. Both of these mediums



Plate 22. — DESIGN IN BUTTER PIPING FOR BOAR'S HEAD, ETC.

are prepared in the same way, however. That is slightly warmed (not melted) in a basin, and then beaten up with a three-pronged fork or small whisk, until it becomes of a creamy appearance, and about the same consistency as glacé Royal. In using the lard for practice, any of the foregoing designs might be utilized, and piped on the back of an iron tray or any other dark enamelled surface, as it is then easier to remove it when no longer required. This lard piping practice should always be a forerunner to the butter decoration, which is used for glazed ox tongues, hams, boar's heads, beef, galantines, &c. Figure piping



Plate 23.—“FULL CRY” (see page 65).

lends itself readily to this class of work, and as the weight of material is almost nil for the accomplishment of a design, it is just as well to use a little of the best butter you can procure for the purpose, so as to be in keeping with the quality of the viand it assists to embellish. A fairly warm place should be selected for butter piping, as, if it is done in a cold larder, the butter will get fast in the cornet and become unman-



Plate 24. —BOAR'S HEAD PIPED WITH BUTTER.

ageable, and that in the basin will become lumpy through the surface and sides getting set. The piping itself may be done in precisely the same way as with glacé Royal, and I herewith give a few designs which are not only suitable for the purpose named, but have been mostly executed in "grease," and, as the illus-

trations will show, have been used on boar's heads. Piping on glazed ox tongues should always be neatly done, and the designs not too heavy, otherwise they look vulgar and "messy," while the artistic effort of the piper makes it appear overloaded.

In my experiences I have known a simple piping sketch in butter—which has decorated a piece of pressed beef—to be the cause of bringing out the whole family party, especially when some subject has been hit upon, not altogether accidentally, which has had its bearing on the hobbies or sporting proclivities of one or more members of the family. Indeed, on one occasion, it was the means of getting an order for over 300 menus, illustrated from designs in glacé Royal; and it is, perhaps, only natural that the member of the family who is almost sure to be the pioneer in taking notice of these little efforts, is the artist of the house, generally one of the daughters.

Although I feel I have now got to the end of "Figure Piping," I by no means wish to convey the impression that the subject itself is unworthy of further comment or effort. But I do think that the young piper who wishes to vary his every-day style by a few figures, may get a few hints from the foregoing pages which will enable him to start on a better footing than if he had not studied them. Figure piping in its broad sense is something like cooking and confectionery—the climax is never reached; but in the first-named it is as well to bear the fact in mind, that he who has the most artistic practice, and the keenest eye for fresh subjects and general effect, will not only accomplish what few things are delineated herein, but will open up a field for himself which may reveal possibilities that he never dreamt of.

THE END.



